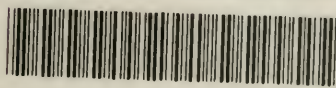


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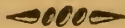
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Wm. M. Van Buren

from Dr. Manney

25-10

CIRCULAR.



To the Freemen of the Counties of Johnston, Wayne, Greene, Lenoir, Jones, Craven and Carteret—composing the Fourth Congressional District of North-Carolina.

James Manney

FELLOW-CITIZENS:

MANY of you have learnt, with deep regret, that our late distinguished representative, the Hon. John H. Bryan, has declined a re-election to the next Congress. During Mr. Bryan's term of service, appropriations have been made by the General Government for deepening the swash at Ocracoke, and a survey has been made between the waters of Neuse River and the harbour at Beaufort, for a ship canal. In order to push forward these important works to their completion, I have taken the liberty of placing my name before you as a Candidate to represent you in the 21st Congress. In the Northern States, the candidates for Congress are sometimes nominated by delegates from the different Counties, or by caucuses of the friends of different parties and candidates. These practices do not prevail in the Southern States, either for members of the Legislature or Congress. I will not, on this occasion, stop to discuss the question, which is the most proper mode of proceeding? but go on to place before you my views of national policy, so far as the constituent may wish to know the general views of his representative.

It has been the practice in the Southern States, for the candidates for Congress to travel through the several Counties, at the Battalion Musters, and make stump-speeches. I do not admire this practice. It consumes the time, and deranges the business of the candidates.

I shall submit this Circular to my Fellow-Citizens, instead of a dozen stump-speeches, which I might deliver, at as many different muster-grounds. I must mention another custom in our Southern States, which

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I strongly disapprove, that of the candidates treating the people with ardent spirits at musters and other public places, before, and also at the election grounds. I can assure you I have no intention of overflowing the district with Rum and Whiskey. To obtain a seat in Congress by such means, is alike disreputable to the people and their representative. It will afford me great pleasure to be the agent of my fellow-citizens, in acts calculated to improve their moral and pecuniary condition—but I must be elected by the unbought suffrages of freemen, or I shall think it more honourable to stay at home and attend to my own business. The citizens of this Republic have recently declared, in a voice loud as the thunders of Mount Sinai, that they cannot endure even the suspicion of "Bribery, Intrigue and Corruption," in the election of their public officers. I therefore call upon all the moral, sedate and reflecting part of this community, to sustain me in another effort to do away the odious and demoralizing practice of treating at elections.

In our Republican form of Government, the people are the fountain of power—all offices are trusts created for their benefit, and not to gratify the cupidity or ambition of any individual. A primary maxim of this form of government is, that the majority must rule. The present Administration having come into power with an overwhelming majority of the people in its favour, it is just and proper that your representative should give to the Administration of General Jackson an honest and energetic support in all measures calculated to promote the happiness, prosperity and glory of our beloved country.

I am of opinion that when a representative knows the will of a majority of his constituents, that he is bound to carry their will into effect, although his own opinion may be different. The representative goes to do what the people in their sovereign capacity cannot conveniently do; and in measures which they deem of great importance to their welfare, he should obey their will—not his own. Many cases of minor importance will daily occur in Congress, in which it would be impossible for your representative to know the opinions of a majority of the people—in all such cases, he will necessarily act according to the dictates of his own judgment. In such cases, the people should judge of their representative with that charity and forbearance, which one gentleman is ever ready to extend to another, who happens to differ with him in opinion.

I beg leave to observe, that in what I am now about to discuss, I have no intention to stir the expiring embers of party strife—but merely to recommend an alteration of our admirable Constitution, which I think will tend to strengthen and perpetuate the Union of the States. Let the Constitution be amended so that the President shall be elected for the term of six years, and be forever after ineligible. Let the people vote

directly for the man of their choice, without the intervention of Electors. Let the polls be kept and returned as for members of Congress, and duplicates forwarded by our Executive to Congress.

When no one candidate has a majority of the whole number of votes, let the two highest on the list be referred back again to the people for their decision. In case of a tie, which could rarely happen, refer back the election to the people, as last mentioned. This amendment would take from the President all temptation to use the power and patronage of his office, with a view to secure his re-election. The term is long enough to test the utility of any new system of policy he might be called upon to pursue. The power of impeachment would be a check—and some safeguard against any flagrant violations of the Constitution. This amendment would prevent altogether the election ever going to the House of Representatives. However pure and honourable may be a Presidential Election in the House of Representatives, the unsuccessful party will be dissatisfied, and surmise that they were defeated by intrigue and corruption. Such suspicions would tend to weaken the love and reverence of the people for our admirable system of government—sow the seeds of violent discord at home, and lower us in the estimation of foreign nations.

The last Tariff Law ought to be modified—it was passed during a period of great political excitement, when passion had seized the reins from reason. At the next session of Congress, which I hope will meet with the most temperate and kindly feelings—and with a determination to do the business of their constituents without delay, let this law be carefully revised. The duties on such articles as enter into the general consumption of the poorer classes of the community, and which cannot be produced advantageously in the United States, should be greatly reduced. The duties on teas and coffee should be very low. A more general use of these articles would tend to diminish the use of ardent spirits. A strong dish of tea or coffee, produces more permanent excitement of the nervous system than ardent spirits, and far less injury to the constitution and morals. I would add the article of sugar—but I am sincerely of opinion that the present duty of three cents per pound, will so far protect and encourage its culture in Georgia, Florida, and Louisiana, as to enable you to purchase it for five or six cents per pound, and by drawing off an immense number of labourers from the cultivation of cotton and corn, will greatly enhance the price of those staple articles of our North-Carolina farmers. Salt is a necessary of life which every one consumes. If it shall be proved on an examination of facts, that salt is higher now to the poor consumers of the article, than it was before the present duty was laid, then let the duty be lowered. In the last war it rose to ten dollars

per bushel, by the interruption of our foreign trade—and the domestic manufacture was not sufficient to supply the wants of the people. It will be worthy the consideration of Congress, whether this real necessary of life should not be manufactured at home, so as to insure a competent supply in time of war. The duty on molasses is too high—I apprehend that it injures our West India trade, which is the principal foreign trade of this State. You will perceive that I am in favour of a “Judicious Tariff”—that is, a Tariff which will promote the prosperity of Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce. I would not knowingly vote for any law which I judged would destroy the farmers, for I consider them as the foundation of the whole structure of society, and the safe depository of our dearest rights and liberties.

I shall conclude my address to you, with some remarks on the most important subject which can arrest your attention. It is calculated, by an able and scientific Engineer, that the losses sustained on our commerce, which passes over Ocracoke bar, amounts to at least five hundred thousand dollars per annum. This enormous annual tax is deducted from the produce of our farmers. The swash prevents the merchant from sending his vessel to sea, only by great exertion, lighterage, and detention. In no business whatsoever is Dr. Franklin’s maxim more emphatically true, that “Time is money.”—The lighterage, delay in getting down to Ocracoke, from the interior towns, the delay in getting on board the lighter loads, by heavy winds, &c. and the extra insurance, consume the profits of the merchant. He is compelled to give low prices to the farmers, who thus ultimately suffer to nearly the whole amount of these enormous losses. To overcome these difficulties, is worthy of a mighty effort.—By the aid of the General Government, this effort is now about to be made under the direction of scientific Engineers—let us hope that it will be completely successful.

In examining the map of our seaboard, we perceive that there are only three main outlets to the ocean, for all the produce of North Carolina, which is exported by our own merchants. These are the bars at Smithville, Beaufort, and Ocracoke.

By the first, a large quantity of produce raised in the vicinity of Cape Fear River and its tributary streams, finds its way to the ocean. The navigation of the Cape Fear is obstructed below Wilmington, by shoals, which have been partially removed. The late Congress have appropriated 20,000 dollars to aid the State in removing these shoals. The losses produced to the commerce of Wilmington by these obstructions are estimated, by some, at 500,000 dollars per annum—they ought certainly to be removed, and I hope Congress will appropriate 100,000 dollars more, for that purpose, if it is found necessary. Beaufort has the

best bar, and most capacious harbour of any town on the seaboard of this State. There is more than 20 feet water on this bar, and a harbour, where more than a thousand vessels may ride in perfect safety during the most violent gales. It appears to me that a powerful effort should be made by the State of North Carolina, to make this a great exporting town. This town is very healthy; vessels would not here lose their crews in the fall season by sickness. A narrow peninsula of low ground separates the deep water in Neuse River from the harbour of Beaufort. A canal about 10 miles in length would be required. I should recommend a canal 80 feet wide at the water surface—depth of water 10 feet—a regulating lock at each end, about 30 feet clear width, and the sides and bottom of the canal to be perfectly secured against slips, washing of the sides, and all other accidents that canals are subject to in a sandy, and alluvial soil. There ought to be a tow path on each side. A canal of such magnitude and importance should be finished in such a perfect manner as to endure without much repairs to the end of time. Such a canal would afford a free passage to schooners drawing nine feet water, and steam boats of the largest class. A survey has been made of a considerable part of this peninsula, by Maj. Hartman Bache, one of the most industrious and accurate of the Topographical Engineers—assisted by Lieuts. Boyce and Wragg—gentlemen of high standing in their profession. The survey of other proposed routes through this peninsula, could be completed in a few days, as there is no material difference in the levels at different parts of the land. Maj. Bache surveyed the proposed routes from North River to Adams' Creek on Neuse—also a route from Core Creek to Adams' Creek—and, I think, took the soundings in Harlow's and Clubfoot's Creeks, which are now united by a small canal. I would beg leave to advise, that our Governor, who is President of the Board of Internal Improvement, should write to the Secretary at War immediately, and request him to instruct the able and scientific Engineer at Fort Macon, to make a Report, as soon as practicable, on a ship canal between the waters of Neuse River and the harbour at Beaufort. In laying down the route for this canal, private, and local interests should be entirely disregarded. It should be made at such place as will enable it to give the greatest facilities as a main outlet for the produce of this section of our state.

Maj. Bache's Report may be expected in a few days—and other proposed routes not surveyed by him, might soon be examined. The public, and our Legislature, would then be in possession of all the facts necessary to form a correct judgment as to the best route for this canal. A company can be incorporated at the next session of our Legislature—individuals will take part of the stock—the State should take part—and

the United States would undoubtedly take a considerable amount; so that this important work might be commenced in the spring of 1830. This canal has been reported as necessary in time of war, by the United States Military Engineers, in order to complete the great line of internal communications along our sea-coast, for the transportation of munitions of war, and re-inforcements to any part of the seaboard, which might be invaded. In time of war the Harbour at Beaufort can be more easily entered by our privateers, lettres of marque, and merchant vessels, than any one on our Southern coast. This harbour lies in a large bay, protected by two of the most dangerous Capes in the world—Cape Fear on the one hand, and Cape Look Out on the other. No blockading squadron will venture to lie before this port. From this place, merchadize could be transported in schooners drawing 9 feet water, through the ship canal to Elizabeth City, then by the Dismal Swamp Canal to Norfolk, and all our Northern cities. All the Northern and Eastern States which own vessels trading to North Carolina, are interested in the completion of this work. In the stormy months, or fall season, all the vessels which now pass into the interior of the State by Ocracoke bar, would come into the port of Beaufort, and pass through this canal—here they would be perfectly safe. Most of the vessels from Newbern, bound to the West Indies, would pass through this canal, and over the bar at Beaufort. The distance from Newbern to Ocracoke bar is about 90 miles—to Beaufort bar is only 45 miles. At this time many vessels from the West Indies fall to the southward of Ocracoke bar, and make a harbour at Beaufort. If this ship canal was effected, they could proceed directly up to Newbern without delay. Now they attempt to go through Core Sound, where there is only 5 or 6 feet water, and sometimes lie on the shoals 3 or 4 weeks. A great number of coasting vessels from the North Counties bound to Wilmington, Charleston and Savannah, would pass through this canal, by which they would shorten their voyage, and shun the dangers of Cape Look Out. A vast amount of ton timber would be brought through this canal, for steam mills, which would be erected in the vicinity of Beaufort. The completion of this canal would lead to other internal improvements in our State, which would add an incalculable amount to our resources and wealth. From every view of the case, it is evident that a small toll levied on vessels and produce passing through this canal, would pay a handsome dividend to the stockholders, and be more profitable and safer than Bank Stock.

In our State, our internal improvements were commenced at the heads of our rivers, and the money expended in these places is entirely lost to the State. It would appear most reasonable, in my opinion, to commence our improvements at our inlets, on the seaboard, and ascend to

the sources of our rivers. After effecting a ship canal, or indeed while this was going on, I would recommend an improvement of the intercourse between Newbern and Raleigh. Three modes of improvement are presented to our view—I shall briefly notice them. The first is by a timber rail road, shod with bars of iron. I think this kind of rail road is much the cheapest, strongest, and best adapted to our State, where timber is plenty and cheap. A rail road of this kind is now constructing between Charleston, South Carolina, and Columbia, in that State. The distance is one hundred and twenty miles, and the transportation of a bale of cotton this distance, will cost only twenty-five cents. Such a road from Newbern to Raleigh would double the value of every acre of land for 20 miles on each side of the road between these towns. All the money saved by this low price for transportation, would go into the pockets of our farmers—and stimulate them to raise many articles for market, which they now cannot sell on account of the expenses of transportation. By a recent improvement in rail road wagons, one horse is enabled to draw 30 tons of produce, on a good rail road. The cost of a rail road would be about one-third of the cost of a canal per mile—and subject to fewer accidents, and interruptions. The next most obvious mode of improvement would be to clear out Neuse River from Newbern to Cobb's mills, near Raleigh, for steam, and tow boat navigation. I should think it would be practicable by stone dams, across the river, and locks to pass the dams, to make four or five feet water from Newbern to Cobb's mills. This would be sufficient for powerful steam boats, which with properly constructed tow boats would bring down all the produce of our farmers, and carry up such merchandise as they needed. The third mode of improvement would be to make a canal of the size and depth of water of the Erie Canal. The Neuse River, and Creeks emptying into it would then be used as feeders for the canal. In order to determine accurately which of these three modes of improvement is best, I would advise that our Board of Internal Improvement make application to the United States Government for two of the graduates at the Military Academy, West Point—and one experienced Topographical Engineer, to run a correct line of levels from Newbern to Raleigh, and make out correct estimates of those three different modes of improvement.

Some of our leading men in this State, are violently opposed to asking any money of the United States for internal improvements—alluding that it is unconstitutional. These opinions are extremely unfortunate—and disastrous to the prosperity of this State. When we know that an overwhelming majority of Congress have decided that appropriations for roads and canals are constitutional, and they are annually appropriating millions for improvements in other States, it appears impolitic and unwise



in North Carolinians to refuse their due proportion of the public funds. No State in the Union stands so much in need of improvement, in her commercial facilities, as North-Carolina—and I have observed in the members of Congress from other States, a generous disposition to do every thing in their power to remove the difficulties in our navigation, under which we have suffered such enormous losses. Shall we churlishly reject the proffered aid—sit down in despair, and daily see our enterprising citizens leaving their homes, with their labourers and capital, and burying themselves in the Western forests? Shall North-Carolina, one of the old thirteen States, be depopulated, while our politicians are mootng constitutional points? I have never yet found any article in the Constitution prohibiting Congress from making appropriations for canals and roads. If we have a Constitution which prohibits Congress from passing such laws as are necessary to promote the happiness and prosperity of the people, let it be amended. But after such laws have been passed for half a century under this Constitution, and our country has prospered beyond all others in the world, I am induced to believe, that the less frequently our Constitution is amended, the more permanent will be the Union of the States, and the more rapid our march to a state of prosperity and power, which will render this Republic the envy and admiration of the world.

I am, respectfully,

Your friend and fellow-citizen,

JAMES MANNEY.

Beaufort, April 5th, 1829.